



Requirements for Hiring an Instructional Coach

The Indiana Department of Education presumes that schools and school districts will use the following qualifications in hiring an instructional coach as identified by the International Reading Association (IRA):

- A minimum of 5 years of successful classroom teaching experience
- Master's degree preferred with concentration in reading/math education
- Highly effective interpersonal and group communications skills
- Strong knowledge base of best practices in instruction
- Strong work ethic, self-directed, and self-motivated

If a professional with the above credentials cannot be found, the school or school district is expected to hire someone with extensive teaching experience in the grade levels with which the coach will be working. The school or district may ask the individual to obtain additional university coursework towards becoming a literacy coach.

Instructional coaches should have deep knowledge and skills in these areas:

- *Data*: reading, interpreting, and applying data to determine appropriate instruction with the ability to teach others to do the same
- *Research-based reading and language arts programs*: knowledge of a variety of programs, their research base, and their appropriate application to specific students and settings
- *Instructional practices for struggling students*: ability to model for other teachers, and from coaching to solo implementation
- *Collaboration*: the ability to work well with others, encourage and support them
- *Skilled observations*: of teachers and students; supportive rather than evaluative
- *Professional Development*: high quality communication skills; knowledge of research and ability to share effectively with others

Additional Information on Hiring an Instructional Coach

Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse, (2006). *Qualifications for literacy coaches: Achieving the gold standard*. Retrieved August 3, 2008 from <http://www.literacycoachingonline.org/briefs/LiteracyCoaching.pdf>

International Reading Association, (2004). *The role and qualifications of the reading coach in the United States: A position statement of the International Reading Association*. DE, Newark: Author. Retrieved August 3, 2008 from http://www.reading.org/downloads/positions/ps1065_reading_coach.pdf

The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, (2007). *Instructional Coaching*. Julie Kowal and Lucy Steiner: Author. Retrieved August 4, 2008 from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/3a/48/11.pdf